

June 17, 2013

Senator Barbara Mikulski
Chairwoman
U.S. Senate
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Richard Shelby
Vice Chairman
U.S. Senate
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

Congressman Harold Rogers
Chairman
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Congresswoman Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Members of Congress:

As organizations representing teachers, administrators, chief state school officers, business and community groups, and members of the education community, we would like to express our strong support for the recommended \$400 million for the Teacher Incentive Fund (renamed the Teacher and Leader Innovation Fund (TLIF) in the Administration's budget request) for fiscal year 2014.

Current TIF funding is supporting groundbreaking changes as recipients develop and implement performance based compensation systems aligned with rigorous evaluation, student growth measures, professional development and career growth for teachers in high need schools. A recent study illustrated increases in teacher effectiveness and student achievement gains at TIF sites across a number of states, districts and schools (<http://www.niet.org/assets/increasing-educator-effectiveness-lessons-learned-from-teacher-incentive-fund-sites.pdf>). The new Teacher and Leader Innovation Fund would build on that strength by ensuring grantees invest in comprehensive human capital systems that improve the effectiveness of teachers and principals and increase the quality of instruction in high need schools.

TIF provides a catalyst for change in how teachers and principals at high need schools are supported, evaluated and compensated. TIF grantees are demonstrating how to create systems that attract and retain the most effective educators in these schools, as well as ways to use more accurate evaluation, targeted professional development and new roles for teacher leaders to drive instructional improvement across the faculty. Continued funding of TIF benefits our nation's students and educator workforce in a number of ways—

- It would ensure teachers are evaluated in comprehensive ways that provide them information to improve their practice

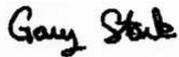
- It would make student achievement growth a *significant* factor in measuring teacher and principal performance
- It would create performance based compensation systems that reward educators for excellence and encourage improvement
- It would create career ladders and pathways for teachers to advance in the profession without having to leave the classroom
- It would provide significant flexibility on the design of systems.

The current program has allowed local school districts and not-for-profits to bring successful, innovative and results-driven programs into these classrooms through strong collaboration between teachers and administrators. To date, after 4 rounds of awards since 2006, there are approximately 130 TIF grantees in more than 25 states and hundreds of districts, each one building on the work of its predecessors.

We urge you to fund the Teacher Incentive Fund and continue its successful work to help states and districts to redesign evaluation, support and compensation with instructional goals. The \$400 million in TIF funding in FY2014 would ensure that we continue to drive these powerful changes to strengthen teacher and principal effectiveness and student success in high need schools.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



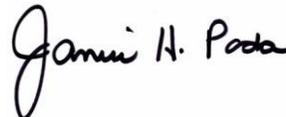
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The Education Trust



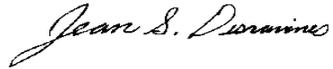
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Gary Beckner
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Celine Coggins
Chief Executive Officer
Teach Plus



Sue Hildick
President
Chalkboard Project



Joe Williams
President
Education Reform Now